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SBE Adopts Resolution Supporting Inclusion of Students in Anti-Bullying Policy Development

Vancouver, Wash. – The Washington State Board of Education (SBE) unanimously voted to adopt an [anti-bullying resolution](#) affirming the board’s commitment to strongly support the inclusion of students in the development of anti-bullying policies within school communities.

At the September board meeting, Kajmere Houchins, a student at Illahee Middle School in Federal Way, brought the issue of bullying to the board’s attention. She spoke about her experience being bullied and shared a [petition](#) she wrote to require schools to allow youth to participate in anti-bullying policymaking.

In October, SBE’s student board members, Mara Childs and Eli Ulmer, wrote a [blog post](#) on their experiences and observations about bullying for National Bullying Prevention Month.

“Bullying doesn’t affect just the bully and their target, there are also others around them who witness the aggression,” Ulmer explained. “It affects everyone and can cause attendance issues, is a distraction, creates stress and anxiety, and makes you feel alone.”

At today’s meeting, Childs and Ulmer gave a [presentation](#) to the board about causes of bullying, how it affects learning, cyberbullying, and how students can be involved in solutions.

“The ways in which kids interact with each other are changing quickly and it is hard for adults to keep up,” said Childs. “Anonymous question sites, social media, texts, and instant messages are a recipe for bullying. Kids are ahead of the game when it comes to technology and they hold the most weight in changing student behavior.”

Childs, with Houchins by her side, read the [anti-bullying resolution](#) her and Ulmer drafted, and the board unanimously voted to adopt it.

Following a round of applause, Houchins thanked the board. “My goal has always been to advocate for the missing youth voice in regards to school policymaking. I want to thank Mara and Eli for their presentation and for all of their handwork. I appreciate the work all of you have done to make Washington schools safe and inclusive to students.”

[RCW 28A.300.285](#)(3) states that district anti-bullying “policy and procedure should be adopted or amended through a process that includes representation of parents or guardians, school employees, volunteers, students, administrators, and community representatives.”



Student board member Mara Childs with Kajmere Houchins

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